

CITY OF PENSACOLA
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, December 6, 2018

Members Present: Neil Richards, Chair, Steve Elliott, Vice Chair, Kyle Kopytchak, Michael Lynch, Calvin Avant, Dr. Gloria Horning

Members Absent: Blase Butts, Bob Bennett

Others Present: Mayor Grover Robinson, Council President Andy Terhaar, City Council Members Sherri Myers and Ann Hill, Teresa Hill, Laurie Murphy, Dave Robau, Chris Maldwin, Rick O'Connor, Christian Wagley, Bev Perry

1. Call to Order/Quorum: The meeting was called to order by Chair Richards. A quorum was established.
2. Chair Richards welcomed Council President Andy Terhaar and City Council members Ann Hill and Sherri Myers to the meeting, briefly outlining the establishment and purpose of the Environmental Advisory Board on environmental issues to improve the environment of the City.

Council Executive Kraher cautioned against having interaction with the Council President since there were additional City Council members present.

Council President Terhaar indicated that even though he is the Council President, he does not represent the Council unless they say, by a majority vote, to go represent the Council. They have not voted to do that. He indicated that he would consider recommendations from the Board for placement on the Council's agenda.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes—November 1, 2018

Motion made by Member Kopytchak to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Horning and was unanimously carried.

4. Updates:
 - a) 12th Avenue Tree Replacement and No Parking Enforcement—Kyle Kopytchak
Council Executive indicated that he would check with the City staff regarding the status of the signs and protective barriers.
 - b) Review of tree and landscaping regulations—Michael Lynch
Laurie Murphy is working on re-writing the Tree Ordinance and will hopefully have it ready for presentation in January. The tree trust funds are safe until it gets fine tuned. Member Lynch asked Ms. Murphy to provide an update.

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Laurie Murphy addressed changes in the ordinance that would change the size of the diameter breast height of heritage trees. Currently heritage trees could be cut down at a diameter breast height of 34 inches. Replacement tree size needs to be increased and other protective reinforcements need to be added to the ordinance.

She is also working on reforestation and will be planting long leaf pines in areas that have been clear cut, along Carpenter's Creek and in City parks. She offered everyone a free tree.

Council Executive Kraher indicated that since the tree ordinance is part of the Land Development Code, the revisions to the ordinance would need to be referred to the Planning Board. A lined through version of the proposed ordinance would need to be provided.

c) Criteria for Tree Fund Grant Proposals—Chair Richards indicated he would like to have the new building inspector attend a meeting to review the process of how the contractors mitigate the development sites and how funds go into the tree fund.

d) Sanders Beach Stormwater Drainage—Steve Elliott—Member Elliott had nothing new to report and indicated that he thought Member Horning pretty much covers it in her updates. He would like to shift his focus of concern to general DEP and EPA assessments in the area. Substantial work is going on at the iron triangle site, which is where Texar, Fairfield and Palafox meet. EPA has been assessing that and is working with the City to turn it into a school bus parking lot or something like that in the future. Also, the City is working with DEP to try and pull up several hundred old creosote pier pilings that are located off the ball park. It is hard to get funding for the disposal of 2200 tons of old pier pilings. They are exploring funds from Northwest Florida Water Management District, DEP Brownfields, etc.

Member Horning indicated that the water had been tested at Sanders Beach recently by the Health Department and was giving a swimming, fishing, etc. warning and wanted to know where the test results were posted. Sanders Beach is not accessible right now, the dock is all torn up and has been for over a year. What wasn't tested was Bruce Beach and that is where the most sewage run off ends up. The Health Department needs to put those warnings out immediately. ECUA doesn't push out boil water notices until 2 days after the fact. Notices need to be made other than on-line, since a lot of people don't have access to computers. This is a health concern to the disenfranchised individuals who are down there fishing.

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e) Environmental Justice/Injustice—Calvin Avant

Member Avant indicated that they would begin testing next week for their environmental employee worker training program. It is a free program for underserved, underemployed individuals who will be trained on clean-up of hazardous waste, construction waste, mold, mildew, lead, asbestos and hazmet certification. Once they complete the training and certification, they will help them get employed. The classes will start on January 7.

He will also be attending a conference in March, the 2019 Citizens Scientists Association Conference where it will teach underrepresented individuals to become citizen scientists, to teach them how to learn what is wrong in their community, to learn how to talk before governmental officials, to stand and speak up for themselves as to what is going on in their neighborhoods and communities where they live. It is something that could possibly be used to start a training program in the local community for people to stand up for themselves.

They are still waiting for the treasury department to come back with restore funds to implement the training program for solar installers.

f) Water Quality of Bay/Gulf—Blaise Butts

Member Butts was not present; however, he supplied a written report that is attached to the agenda.

Member Horning indicated at the next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Board, she would like to do a power point on Climigation, it's the impact that climate change is having on communities. The Public Lab is still working on their adopt a drain project, and she just received \$500 more for paint for that project. She attended a conference in Nevada where she saw the impact of climate change where they are over developing land and causing flooding in Nevada. The backyards are pools in the new homes in the Tanyard. She's been helping them dig ditches to get the water out. FEMA will be changing the rules on flood insurance in 2020. It will no longer be elevation, it will be distance to water.

Chair Richards welcomed Mayor Grover Robinson to the Environmental Advisory Board meeting.

Mayor Robinson expressed his appreciation for the work that the Environmental Advisory Board is doing and was excited to see how environmental issues can be incorporated and pushed forward. Pensacola has the opportunity to be the leader in Escambia County. He's excited about the various stormwater projects the City is undertaking to improve water quality going into the various estuaries.

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He's also excited about the air and other issues as well, anything that could be done to position Pensacola to do better with our environment to review those opportunities. He's excited to see what Christian Wagley and the transition report come forward with and the things that can be implemented.

Member Kopytchak suggested that perhaps the Environmental Advisory Board look at ways to eliminate the use of plastics and Styrofoam cups from City Hall and come up with an alternative, so that the Environmental Advisory Board does not have to be guilty, as we speak, of polluting at the same time.

Mayor Robinson stated that he would be glad to look into that.

Chair Richards also mentioned the work that has been undertaken by Member Butts in researching the use and location of water refilling stations in the City.

Member Horning mentioned participating with a larger organization mapping flooding areas. She has twenty rain gages coming in, will identify where they should go and that person in that community will map it to see where our big flood areas are. This came out of New Orleans and they are going to do it, too. We are number two to do it in the country.

Chair Richards asked for an update on the potential future of the hatchery as an educational facility, not to hatch fish but to enlighten the public on the water quality and sea grasses and where the real fish hatchery lies within the sea grasses of Perdido and Pensacola bays.

Mayor Robinson indicated that most of the environmental staff comes from partnerships with Escambia County and he has worked very diligently with the individuals to see things happen. The Florida Gulf Coast Consortium is responsible for the state expenditure plan and one of the projects for Escambia County is dealing with Bayou Chico, which is a shared county/city resource. There is no doubt that we want to see improvement. The story we are doing environmentally is that we are having success, we just need to continue to make those things and accelerate that success and figure out those things that we are doing to cause destruction and figure out how to change or mitigate those. We are making a positive effort but there is no doubt that we could be doing more to make a positive effort. He is excited to be here with a team of engaged citizens and working with the professionals and staff he is sure inroads can be made. The estuary plan that is going forward will be exciting and having the scientific community be a part of that will be beneficial. He is very proud of that going forward.

Chair Richards inquired about the demolition of the Bay Bridge and the use of that material to build artificial reefs in the bay.

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Mayor Robinson indicated that he was not sure if the City has done anything to secure permits for that. The County has looked at and discussed near/in shore reef opportunities but has not made any permits about that, just discussed it. He has been involved with a site that the county has already been permitted near shore, in state waters, close to the pass. The contract with Skanska allows them to have control of the rubble, to recycle and use themselves. If they don't do that, there are some fairly large pieces that we would love to see them turned into a reef and the County has worked hard on that.

Mayor Robinson further discussed the success of Project Greenshores and how it has helped in bringing back seagrass in that area. The Estuary plan coming forward will probably identify more living shoreline projects to be built. There is a living shoreline project planned for White Island, funded by NERDA. Also the development of oyster banks in Bayou Texar is helping to filter the water, grow new oysters and the seagrass is coming back. Efforts undertaken by Council Member Myers on Carpenter's Creek will hopefully continue to keep a clear creek and help the northern area of Bayou Texar.

Chair Richards asked the Mayor for his thoughts on the Tree Fund and the tree ordinance and wanted to know if the Mayor had a chance to look into that.

Mayor Robinson stated that trees are vitally important. The challenge is whenever you have a native environment, making sure that you have the right trees in the right place. We need to constantly focus on how we replant and how we put the trees in there to make sure that we will have a tree canopy for future generations.

g) Flooding/Toxin Issues in Tanyard—Gloria Horning
Previously addressed by Member Horning under item d) and f)

h) Environmental Impacts on Disenfranchised Communities—Gloria Horning
Previously addressed by Member Horning under item d) and f)

i) Renewable Energy Sources—Neil Richards, Robert Bennett.
Member Bennett was not present; however, he supplied a written report that is attached to the agenda.

Chair Richards explained the need to reduce carbon and the use of wind and solar power as a resource to help reduce the amount of carbon in the atmosphere. He also expressed the need to look at increasing the use of hydrogen to help reduce the carbon imprint to zero.

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4. New Business
 - a) Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force Report

Chair Richards opened discussion on the Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force Report that was presented to City Council in November.

Member Kopytchak made a motion to send a recommendation to City Council that City Hall start to replace all disposable coffee cups to paper or biodegradable and then as a project, starting at City Hall, replace the plastic water bottles. Member Avant seconded the motion.

Member Horning indicated that this has previously been done.

Council Executive indicated that he would prepare something and obtain a sponsor from City Council.

No comments from the public.

Vote was taken and unanimously carried.

Member Horning indicated that she made some notes on some other areas covered in the report to review on her original copy. However, she didn't bring it with her.

Further discussion occurred on how the Environmental Advisory Board will review the report and what areas the Board could focus on and make recommendations to implement to the City Council. As a reminder, the expertise of the members of the Task Force can be utilized when considering particular items in the report to bring forward as action items.

5. Board Member Comments

Chair Richards invited Christian Wagley, member of the Mayor's Transition Team on Environmental Issues to address the Environmental Advisory Board. There are eleven members serving on the Transition Team, with a final report due back within 90 days. Public input and public engagement are a big part of gathering information for the report, taking the pulse of the environmental community to find out what the issues are. From attending the many meetings of the Environmental Advisory Board and Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Task Force, he's been able to gather a lot of information. He will take all the information gathered from various environmental meetings already scheduled in the community and hone it into recommendations for inclusion in the final report to Mayor Robinson. If any

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member of the Environmental Advisory Board has any suggestions on taking the input and getting it over the next two months, let him know. He would like to be scheduled as a regular agenda item at the next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Board for a back and forth discussion. As a matter of public record, he has a city email address for people to correspond with him on the transition team work which is cwagley@cityofpensacola.com. The next meeting of the Transition Team will be next Thursday at 9 a.m. in the Hagler/Mason Conference Room, 2nd floor, City Hall.

Member Horning indicated that she is on the Escambia County Emergency Management list because she is CERT trainer. They just sent out an announcement about a flooding threat for Saturday afternoon into Saturday night. They are looking at anywhere from 2 to up to 6 inches of rain.

6. Reports and Announcements

Member Avant reported on a project his organization does for Christmas. This is the 13th year they have done an angel tree for children whose parents are in prison. They are working with Prison Fellowship Ministries and the Porch Creek Indians providing gifts and dinner, held on December 15 at the Marine Young/Wedgewood Community Center. They are accepting donations, toys, gifts and volunteers for this event.

Laurie Murphy reported that she has received 1500 saplings from the National Forestry Service and is working with the County, FDEP and a couple of other environmental groups to come up with some areas that need saturation and invited anyone to attend or who had ideas for placement to contact her at laurie@emeraldcoastkeeper.org. It will be next Saturday from 9 a.m to 12 Noon.

Also, Emeraldcoastkeeper, Inc. has been working on a project for the last 3 years on the renewal of the NPDES permit for the Christ Steam Plant. After working with the FDEP attorney, they have designated the Emeraldcoastkeeper Organization to help with the public hearing on December 19 from 11 to 1 p.m. at the Moose Lodge, 8851 Lewis Street. They will be taking public comments through that hearing on their stormwater permit to help with better compliance with heavy metal discharges and effluent into Escambia River. It is important for the community to get involved. It is the first time in the history of the Christ Plant that the citizens have been involved in helping to draft a new permit. They have had an extension put in on the last one and there are a lot of grey areas in their last one that allows for discharges to enter into the Escambia River for up to 30 to 60 days before any testing is done, even though it is reported within 24 hours and a letter sent within 7 – 10 days. There have been several consent orders given to the Christ Plant.

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Member Horning indicated that she has been working with Perdido Key folks about International Paper Mill. There are ponds that are at top level and apparently they want to run a road through where these two dioxide ponds are located. It is an agenda item on the County Commission meeting. It will also have an effect on the landfills that go into Perdido Bay.

Laurie Murphy expressed the need for public participation and public education and as long as the public has that tool, it will help to integrate better planning and to see different aspects and different facets of permits and environmental issues.

7. Public Comments—Open Forum

Dave Robau, with Gulf Coast Energy Network and also works as a consultant with municipalities to help them reduce their solid waste, save energy, save water and carbon emissions and save paper, suggested printing documents double sided. It takes almost 3 gallons of water to make a single sheet of paper.

Chairman Richards also commented on the presentations that Mr. Robau made to the County about his proposed waste facility and the possibility of having the city's recyclables utilized. Mr. Robau indicated that the objective is to end the practice of landfills.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the EAB, the meeting was adjourned at 3:36 p.m.